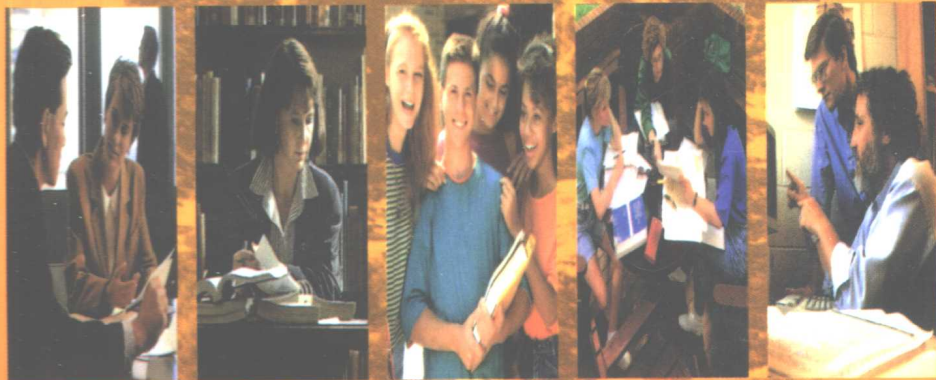


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出版前言

自 20 世纪 80 年代末起,世界各国的英语教学界就对以全新构想编写的“柯林斯 COBUILD 英语词典系列”表示出极大的兴趣,并一致认为,该系列词典开创了高科技时代词典编纂的先河。这一系列词典是在世界著名的哈珀-柯林斯出版社(HarperCollins Publishers Limited)的支持下,由英国伯明翰大学(Birmingham University)词典编纂组经过十余年的努力,精心编纂而成。参与编写工作的有数百名英语教学、词典编纂和电脑软件专家。从词典的研制到出版花费了巨额的资金。

“柯林斯 COBUILD 英语词典系列”之所以被称为“以全新构想编写而成的新一代辞书”,是因为英国伯明翰大学词典编纂组首先意识到电脑时代的到来对于词典编纂的意义,并将大型电脑运用于词典的编纂工作。由于电脑的发展,利用电脑庞大的存储和检索功能对大量语言现象作具体详尽的分析成为可能。以往,词典编纂人员只能根据个别语言现象推断出词义和用法;现在,他们可以利用先进的电脑设备,输入和检索数以亿万字计的语料,根据大量而确切的语言数据来确定词义和用法。英国伯明翰大学词典编纂组就是根据上述原则,编纂了这一系列新颖独特的词典。

本系列词典中所有的例词和例句均取材于 COBUILD 英语语料库(The Bank of English)。该英语语料库的名称 COBUILD 系 COLLINS BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE DATABASE 的首字母缩略词,如果直译应该是“柯林斯-伯明翰大学国际语料库”。该语料库包含了小说和非小说类的多种语体,如广播和电视用语、日常自然会话、报刊杂志文章,也包含了英国英语、美国英语和澳大利亚英语及多种英语方言。

伯明翰大学的词典编纂组正是依据了该语料库所提供的词频,确定了哪些是最常用词,哪些是次常用词;哪些是美国英语用法,哪些是英国英语用法或澳大利亚英语用法。词典中越是常用的词,解释越是详细,不仅提供该词的语义和句法特征,提供常用的习语和词语的搭配,还专门辟出栏目以说明用法,并尽可能用简洁明了的句子来解释词目和习语。

本社引进出版的《柯林斯 COBUILD 英语用法词典》是一部英语用法方面的权威工具书,适用于中高级程度的英语学习者和工作者。本词典详细解释了 2 000 多个英语用法要点,使全面掌握英语用法成为可能,是学好英语的必备工具书。

《柯林斯 COBUILD 英语用法词典》功能详尽,提供了有关英语时间表达、语法、标点、较难单词和短语的用法要点以及英国英语和美国英语之间的区别等信息,并辅之以大量真实自然的例句,通俗易懂,便于广大英语学习者理解掌握。本词典同时还收录了各级常用词,帮助学习者扩大词汇量。

《柯林斯 COBUILD 英语用法词典》特点鲜明,在分析过程中注重实践运用,通过典型错误与正确用法对照,使学习者避免重蹈覆辙。对一些特别重要又易犯错的地方,更用“警告”标示,给学习者以深刻的印象。

为了提高我国的英语教学和科研水平,更好地为读者服务,上海外语教育出版社引进了“柯林斯 COBUILD 英语词典系列”,以让我国广大英语学习者和从事相关工作的人员能够获得更多更新颖的工具书。为此,上海外语教育出版社的编辑和哈珀-柯林斯出版社的编辑通力合作,对本系列词典中的例句进行了修订,使之更符合我国的国情。毋庸置疑,如同其他词典一样,本系列词典在编校过程中难免仍有疏漏和失误,敬请广大读者批评指正。

需要说明的是,本系列词典的例证均选自 COBUILD 英语语料库,采用这些例句的目的是为了说明词目的语义和语法特征及用法,并不代表原出版社和本社的观点。

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Introduction

I am very pleased to introduce an important addition to the COBUILD range of English Reference books. For the first time, a usage book has been compiled from a large and representative corpus of English texts – the Bank of English. Usage has long been a rather mysterious feature of language – partly a kind of 'good manners' with language and partly a set of notes on individual words. Neither a grammar nor a dictionary, a usage book seemed to fall in between them, with no proper place for it in language study.

COBUILD has changed all that. Our compilers are able to find out how people actually use language, by studying millions of words. The statements in this book are based on this study, and are supported by actual examples, not invented ones. Usage becomes the centre of language patterning, not a footnote to it.

When the COBUILD project was first set up in 1980, there were three books mentioned. One, a radical new dictionary, was the main aim, but it was thought at the time that two other books would make up a fairly comprehensive set of information about English. These were a grammar and a usage book.

The Dictionary was published in 1987, and the Grammar in 1990. This Usage Book completes the trio. Nearly everything a person needs to know about English should be found in one of these three books.

Usage is the vital detail of language, involving aspects of grammar, meaning, idiom, variety and purpose. It concentrates on the individuality of expression, and most of its statements concern the way words are arranged to express a particular meaning or to do a particular job. There is no generality in most of the statements in this book, because usage deals with all the things that are not covered by the generalities.

Grammar properly deals with broad general statements, like the distinction between count and uncount nouns, or transitive and intransitive verbs. Each of these divides into sub-classes and sub-sub-classes and so on until eventually we get down to the unusual behaviour of just one or two words. The point of grammar is now lost, and the detailed patterns of usage can be set out individually.

There is no strict dividing line, and many grammars for teaching are heavily biased towards usage. It is, after all, the usage end of grammar that learners most need. However powerful the generalities, learners are eventually measured by the actual words and phrases they use, and so they are probably more concerned about the precise points of usage than the abstract notions of countability or transitivity.

In this book, we provide a number of entries on grammatical categories in order to link the facts of usage with the broader issues of grammar. Beyond this level the reader must turn to the Collins Cobuild English Grammar for fuller treatment.

A traditional dictionary does not give much usage information, though some modern dictionaries, like the COBUILD range, show a lot through the choice of typical real examples. Dictionaries of idioms come close to usage, but the special meaning that we associate with an idiom is not usually a feature of a usage statement.

More and more nowadays, reference books are trying to help a user produce competent language. Previously they were mainly useful for understanding language. The pressure is on to provide guidance about every detail of usage. Native speakers of English have had usage books for many years, and language professionals like

journalists have long had style books and compendiums of usage. Everyone needs a reference book of this kind, and the non-native user of English is no exception. This Usage Book is suitable for students from intermediate to advanced level, and for teachers of English.

The Entries

A large number of the entries are short notes on individual words and phrases. Two words may be easily confused, like 'comprehensive' and 'comprehensible'. One word may require another, for example 'afford' requires 'can', 'could', or 'be able to'. Where American and British usage are different, this is pointed out, so that you do not eat chips when you want crisps, or buy pants when you want trousers. A careful distinction is made between 'disabled', 'handicapped', 'crippled' and other words to which some people are very sensitive.

All the entries are in strict alphabetical order, with cross references. Some entries are longer, because of the special nature of the words. There are also a number of long entries on important usage topics such as **Invitations** and **Punctuation**. In these entries a large number of points are gathered together and presented so that the whole entry can be consulted, or just one or two of the points. There are frequent side headings to help users find a particular point, so that the entry can be used for quick reference.

One feature of COBUILD is that we try to list all the words or phrases that are used in the same way, rather than just giving one or two examples. The lists are very helpful for language production, for example those in the grammar entry on **Complements** give information on what verbs take what sort of complements.

The Examples

Above all, COBUILD rests its authority on actual examples. Thousands of real extracts from the growing Bank of English are used to demonstrate the usage points, and each of them is chosen as an appropriate model, so that it can be confidently followed. The English that people invent to illustrate a point is not part of their real communication and may be quite misleading.

If you are fluent in a language you cannot always bring to mind all the details of your actual usage, because it is below your conscious awareness. Hence you may not be able to produce an example that is really reliable.

At COBUILD there is no problem, except to select the very best from a huge range of real examples. These examples are not just 'based on' a corpus but are actual citations from a corpus. During the compilation of this Usage Book, the corpus has grown from 20,000,000 to 150,000,000 words, and we hope to convince users that real examples are the only reliable evidence of usage.

A usage book can be improved by comments from the users, and I always make a plea for feedback, because it helps us very much to design books which are helpful guides to the language.

John Sinclair
Editor-in-Chief, COBUILD
Professor of Modern English Language
University of Birmingham

The Bank of English

Since 1980 COBUILD has been gathering real language for its files. Each document or transcript is carefully indexed and put into a form suitable for the COBUILD computers to handle. The start of the Nineties prompted a big new effort to collect over two hundred million words. At the time of writing, this total is likely to be achieved before the end of 1992 – and we will need more and more to keep our information up to date.

This corpus is called the Bank of English, and it is a unique resource that powers all the COBUILD publications. The texts are carefully selected; although 200,000,000 words sounds a lot, there is so much now available from computer typesetting that a lot of skill is needed to make the corpus a faithful record of current English. Hundreds of tape recordings are made and carefully transcribed so that the spoken language is well represented, and all sorts of small-scale documents, local publications, letters etc. are gathered to balance the big output of the newspaper presses.

We are most grateful to the large number of contributors who have generously allowed their language to be used as a source of our knowledge, understanding and exemplification.

John Sinclair
Editor-in-Chief, COBUILD

Guide to the Usage

The aim of this book is to help learners of English to use individual words correctly and to choose the right words and structures for the meaning they want to convey. Each entry is based on the latest evidence in the Cobuild corpus, so that both learners and teachers will find the book useful as an authoritative reference on how English is actually used today. A priority has been to make it clear which words and structures are used in conversation, and which should only be used in writing. Differences between British and American usage are also clearly indicated.

For ease of access, entries are arranged alphabetically. When information about the use of a word, or additional relevant information, is to be found in an entry under another headword, a cross-reference is given.

There are various types of entry, as explained below.

Entries for individual words

The entries for individual words explain how to use the word, for example by saying which preposition should be used after the word, or whether you should use a 'to'-infinitive or an '-ing' form after it. This book deals with words which are known to cause problems for learners. For extra clarity, we often explicitly mention what learners should not say as well as what they should say. These comments should be useful for learners who are drawing false parallels between their own language and English, or between different words in English.

desire

A **desire** is a feeling that you want something or want to do something. You usually talk about a **desire for** something or a **desire to do** something.

...a tremendous desire for liberty.

Stephanie felt a strong desire for coffee.

He had not the slightest desire to go on holiday.

Note that you do not talk about a 'desire for doing' something.

When drawing the learner's attention to a way in which a word or expression cannot be used, we give the word or expression that should be used instead, if there is one.

accept

If you **accept** someone's advice or suggestion, you decide to do what they advise or suggest.

If she accepts the advice, she feels happier.

I knew that they would accept my proposal.

However, you do not say that you 'accept to do' what someone suggests. You say that you **agree to do** it.

The princess agreed to go on television.

She agreed to let us use her flat while she was away.

Entries for easily confused words

If two words are sometimes confused with each other, both words are given in the entry heading. For example, the entry headed **intelligent - intellectual** explains the differences between 'intelligent' and 'intellectual'.

Some entries explain the difference between words which are similar in form but have different meanings.

effective - efficient

Something that is **effective** produces the results that it is intended to produce.

...effective street lighting.

...an effective mosquito repellent.

A **person**, machine, or organization that is **efficient** does a job well and successfully, without wasting time or energy.

You need a very efficient production manager.

Engines and cars can be made more efficient.

human - humane

Human /hju:mən/ means 'relating to people'.

...the human body.

...human relationships.

Humane /hju:mən/ means 'showing kindness and sympathy, especially in preventing or reducing suffering'.

...a humane plea for mercy and compassion.

...the most humane method of killing badgers.

Other entries distinguish between words which have a similar basic meaning but are used in slightly different ways.

called - named

You use **called** or **named** when you are giving the name of someone or something. **Named** is less common than **called**, and is not usually used in conversation.

Did you know a boy called Desmond?

We pass through a town called Monmouth.

Anna had a boyfriend named Shorty.

You can use **called** either after a noun or after 'be'.

Komis asked me to appear in a play called Katerina.

The book was called The Goalkeeper's Revenge.

You only use **named** immediately after a noun.

The victim was an 18-year-old girl named Marinetta Jirkowski.

There are also entries which point out differences between British and American usage, where these might cause confusion.

post - mail

The public service by which letters and parcels are collected and delivered is usually called the **post** in British English and the **mail** in American English. **Mail** is also sometimes used in British English, for example in the name 'Royal Mail'.

There is a cheque for you in the post.

Winners will be notified by post.

Your reply must have been lost in the mail.

British speakers usually refer to the letters and parcels delivered to them on a particular occasion as their **post**. American speakers refer to these letters and parcels as their **mail**. Some British speakers also talk about their **mail**.

They read their bosses' post.

I started to read my mail.

Entries dealing with groups of words

In some entries, larger groups of words which have a similar basic meaning but different shades of meaning are explained. For example, in the entry at **beautiful** there is an explanation of the differences between the following words: attractive, beautiful, good-looking, gorgeous, handsome, pretty, stunning. These entries have a vocabulary building function and could be exploited especially with more advanced students.

The following entries deal with larger groups of words:

beautiful	dignified	new	stubborn
cook	fat	obedient	thin
crippled	forceful	old	tools
curious	madness	proud	unusual
damage	mean	retarded	work

Some entries contain graded lists of words – that is, lists of words which indicate different degrees of something. For example, the entry at **happy - sad** shows a range of adjectives that are used to indicate how happy or sad someone is:

- ▶ ecstatic, elated, euphoric
- ▶ joyful, radiant, jubilant
- ▶ happy, cheerful, jolly
- ▶ light-hearted
- ▶ contented, fulfilled
- ▶ dissatisfied, moody, discontented
- ▶ sad, unhappy, depressed, gloomy, glum, dejected, despondent, dispirited
- ▶ miserable, wretched

Words indicating roughly the same degree are on the same line, preceded by a black arrow. The words on each line are then arranged in order of frequency. So, for example, 'ecstatic' is commoner than 'elated', and 'elated' is commoner than 'euphoric'.

The following entries contain graded lists:

happy - sad
like - dislike
pleased - disappointed
small - large

There are also the following graded lists of adverbials in the entry at **Adverbials**:

adverbials of frequency (never - always)
duration (briefly - always)
degree (little - enormously)
extent (partly - completely)
probability (conceivably - definitely)

There is a graded list of adverbs of degree used in front of adjectives in the entry at **Adverbs**.

Topic entries

Some entries in this book deal with topics of various kinds. They tell you about the words, structures, and expressions that you use when you are talking about a particular kind of thing, such as age or money, or when you are in a particular kind of situation, for example when you are saying goodbye or thank you. Some of the topic entries tell you about particular groups of words that have a common characteristic or use, for example abbreviations or words that are used to refer to groups. There are also entries on punctuation and spelling.

This book contains the following topic entries:

Abbreviations	Names and titles
Addressing someone	Nationality words
Advising someone	Numbers and fractions
Age	Offers
Agreeing and disagreeing	Opinions
Apologizing	Permission
Asking for repetition	Pieces and amounts
Capital letters	Places
Complimenting and congratulating someone	Possession and other relationships
Criticizing someone	Punctuation
Days and dates	Reactions
Fixed pairs	Replies
Greetings and goodbyes	Requests, orders, and instructions
Groups of things, animals, and people	Spelling
'-ic' and '-ical' words	Suggestions
Intentions	Telephoning
Introducing yourself and other people	Thanking someone
Invitations	Time
Letter writing	Transport
Male and female	Warning someone
Meals	Words with alternative spellings
Measurements	Words with the same pronunciation
Money	Words with two pronunciations

Grammar entries

The grammar entries in this book contain basic grammatical information, together with information on particularly difficult grammatical points. There is also a Glossary of grammatical terms on pages xii - xviii, which acts as an index to the grammar entries.

This book contains the following grammar entries:

Adjectives	'-ing' forms	Qualifiers
Adverbials	Inversion	Quantity
Adverbs	Irregular verbs	Questions
Auxiliaries	Linking adverbials	Question tags
Broad negatives	'-ly' words	Relative clauses
Clauses	Modals	Reporting
Comparative and superlative adjectives	Modifiers	Sentences
Comparative and superlative adverbs	Noun groups	Singular and plural
Comparison	Noun modifiers	Split infinitives
Complements	Nouns	Subjects
Conjunctions	Objects	The Subjunctive
Continuous tenses	The Passive	Subordinate clauses
Contractions	The Past	Tenses
Determiners	Past participles	'That'-clauses
'-ed' adjectives	Phrasal verbs	'To'-infinitive clauses
Ellipsis	Plural forms of nouns	Verbless clauses
The Future	Possessive determiners	Verbs
Imperatives	Prepositions	'Wh'-clauses
Infinitives	The Present	'Wh'-words
'-ing' adjectives	Pronouns	

More detailed grammatical information on all these topics can be found in the Collins Cobuild English Grammar.

Left Column headings

Many entries have headings in a column to the left of the text which draw attention to the particular use or structure that is being dealt with, or to a word that is being contrasted with another word.

The label **WARNING** is used to draw the learner's attention to a potential error or area of confusion.

Register information

We have tried to make it clear which words and expressions are used in conversation and which are used mainly in writing. For example, 'accustomed to' and 'used to' have the same meaning, but people do not usually use 'accustomed to' in conversation. Words and expressions used in conversation are often also used in pieces written in an informal, conversational style, such as letters to friends and non-serious articles in magazines. Similarly, words and expressions used in writing are also often used in formal speech, for example news broadcasts and lectures.

When a word, expression, or structure occurs only in novels and written descriptions of events, we say that it occurs only 'in stories'. For example, 'dress' is used to mean 'put on your clothes' in stories, but in conversation you would say 'get dressed'. Words described as 'literary', such as the verb 'desire' and the adjective 'infamous', are used in poetical writing and passionate speeches.

In entries dealing with topics such as **Apologizing** and **Invitations**, we sometimes make a distinction between formal and informal ways of saying something. People use informal expressions when speaking to friends and relatives. They use formal expressions when speaking to people they do not know well or when they are in a formal situation such as a meeting. Formal expressions tend to be used especially by older people.

If we say that a word or expression is not used 'in modern English', we mean that you may come across it in a book written some time ago, but it would not sound natural in writing today, and should definitely not be used in conversation. For example, in modern English 'have' is used with words referring to meals, not 'take'. If a word is described as 'old-fashioned', it occurs in old books and may still be used by older people today, but is becoming uncommon.

If we say that a word or expression is not used 'in standard English', we mean that speakers of some varieties of English use it, but it would be regarded as incorrect by most people.

A word that is described as 'neutral' is used simply to indicate that someone or something has a particular quality. A word that is 'complimentary' or 'shows approval' indicates also that you admire the person you are describing. A word that is 'uncomplimentary' or 'shows disapproval' indicates that you disapprove of the person or do not find them attractive.

Glossary of grammatical terms

abstract noun a noun such as 'joy', 'size', or 'language' which refers to a quality, idea, or experience rather than something which is physical or concrete. Compare with **concrete noun**. See entry at **Nouns**.

active voice verb groups such as 'gives', 'took', or 'has made', where the subject is the person or thing doing the action or responsible for it. EG *The storm destroyed dozens of trees*. Compare with **passive voice**.

adjectival clause another name for **relative clause**.

adjective a word used to tell you more about a thing, such as its appearance, colour, size, or type. EG *...a pretty blue dress*. See entry at **Adjectives**.

adjunct another name for **adverbial**.

adverb a word such as 'quickly' or 'now' that gives information about the circumstances or nature of an event or state. See entries at **Adverbials** and **Adverbs**. Types of adverbs include:

adverb of degree an adverb which indicates the degree or intensity of an action or quality. EG *I enjoyed it enormously... She felt extremely tired*.

adverb of duration an adverb which indicates how long something lasts. EG *He smiled briefly*.

adverb of frequency an adverb which indicates how often something happens. EG *I sometimes regret it*.

adverb of manner an adverb which indicates the way in which something happens or is done. EG *She watched him carefully*.

adverb of place an adverb which gives information about position or direction. EG *Come here*.

adverb of time an adverb which gives information about when something happens. EG *I saw her yesterday*.

adverbial a word or phrase which gives information about the circumstances or nature of an event or state. EG *She laughed nervously... No birds or animals came near the body*. Also called 'adjunct'. See also **sentence adverbial**, and entry at **Adverbials**.

adverbial clause a subordinate clause which gives more information about the event described in the main clause. See entry at **Subordinate clauses**.

adverb phrase two adverbs used together. EG *She spoke very quietly*.

affirmative another name for **positive**.

affix a letter or group of letters that is added to the beginning or end of a word to make a different word. EG *anti-communist, harmless*. See also **suffix** and **prefix**.

agent the person who performs an action.

agreement another name for **concord**.

apostrophe s an ending ('s) added to a noun to indicate possession. EG *...Harriet's daughter... ..the professor's husband... ..the Managing Director's*

secretary. See entry at 's.

apposition the placing of a noun group after a noun or pronoun in order to identify someone or something or give more information about them. EG *...my daughter Emily*.

article see **definite article, indefinite article**.

aspect the use of verb forms to show whether an action is still continuing, is repeated, or is finished.

attributive used to describe adjectives such as 'classical', 'outdoor', and 'woollen' that are normally only used in front of a noun. When any adjective is used in front of a noun, you can say that it is used attributively. Compare with **predicative**.

auxiliary one of the verbs 'be', 'have', and 'do' when they are used with a main verb to form tenses, negatives, questions, and so on. Also called 'auxiliary verb'. **Modals** are also auxiliary verbs. See entries at **Auxiliaries** and **Modals**.

bare infinitive the infinitive of a verb without 'to'. EG *Let me think*.

base form the form of a verb which has no letters added to the end and is not a past form, for example 'walk', 'go', 'have', 'be'. The base form is the form you look up in a dictionary.

broad negative one of a small group of adverbs, including 'barely' and 'seldom', which are used to make a statement almost negative. EG *I barely knew her*. See entry at **Broad negatives**.

cardinal number a number used for counting, such as 'one', 'nineteen', or 'a hundred'. See entry at **Numbers and fractions**.

case the use of different forms of nouns or pronouns in order to show whether they are the subject or object of a clause, or whether they are possessive. EG *I/me, who/whom, Mary/Mary's*.

classifying adjective an adjective such as 'Indian', 'wooden', or 'mental' which is used to identify something as being of a particular type. These adjectives do not have comparatives or superlatives. Compare with **qualitative adjective**. See entry at **Adjectives**.

clause a group of words containing a verb. See also **main clause** and **subordinate clause**, and entry at **Clauses**.

cleft sentence a sentence in which emphasis is given to either the subject or the object by using a structure beginning with 'it', 'what', or 'all'. EG *It's a hammer we need... What we need is a hammer*.

collective noun a noun such as 'committee', 'team', or 'family' that refers to a group of people or things. See entry at **Nouns**.

colour adjective an adjective such as 'red', 'blue', or 'scarlet' which indicates what colour something is. See entry at **Adjectives**.

common noun a noun such as 'sailor', 'computer',